



Marvel Masterworks: The Savage She-Hulk, Vol. 1

David Anthony Kraft

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Collects Savage She-Hulk (1980) #1-14.

When criminal defense attorney Jennifer Walters is shot by a mob hitman, her cousin saves her life with a blood transfusion - but that cousin is Bruce Banner, and his gamma-irradiated blood turns her into the Savage She-Hulk! Suddenly she's a mean, green lawyering machine, and criminals the world over had better watch out. Now, experience She-Hulk's adventures from the very beginning! Her quest will take her from the halls of justice to other dimensions and pit her against Iron Man, mind-controlling cults, the Man-Thing, and even her own father. But despite her new power, can Jennifer Walters survive the beast within? Her own blood is killing her - and only Morbius the Living Vampire may have the cure!

Marvel Masterworks: The Savage She-Hulk, Vol. 1 Details

Marvel Masterworks: The Savage She-Hulk, Vol. 1 (Marvel Masterworks: The Savage She-Hulk #1)

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Max Drifill says

She-Hulk began as a way for Marvel to ensure it got paid if the producers of the wildly popular Hulk tv show introduced a woman who was also a Hulk. That may be a shallow motive but it did give Marvel comics a very exciting and worthy female superhero and one that had her own title.

The month to month adventures aren't exactly the most thrilling. What makes the book hang together is the wonderful character of Jen Walters and her She-Hulk alter ego.

We notice right away that Jen Walters is a woman on top of things. She is a sharp prosecutor. This is a modern, almost ahead of her time woman in comics. She is a professional whose goals are defined by her, and not a husband or boyfriend. She is no one's side kick. The book is also unapologetically modern in the way it lets Jen have fairly open relationships with a few different men in the book. She has confidence in herself and doesn't pine after any of the men in her life over much.

The type of Hulk a person becomes seems to depend a great deal on how their personality interacts with power. The Hulk will reveal a personality's flaws. Banner carries the scars of an abusive home. His hulk wants to be a lone and safe. Emile Blonsky's Hulk became the Abomination. His personality revealed in the way it could impose its will on, and hurt others even more than he could before. Jen Walters expression of the Hulk was almost exactly what you would expect from someone who was at ease with who she was. It's not a smooth ride, but she manages to control her expression of the big green in pretty short order.

José Ignacio ZG says

In 1977 it began to air The Incredible Hulk TV series, and by 1979 it was pretty much a fad. To anticipate the probable creation of a woman version of Hulk in the series, Marvel asked the already absolutely legendary Stan Lee to create the character first (the last one he would give birth until 1992). Stan Lee and John Buscema are responsible of issue #1 of Savage She-Hulk, first appeared in 1980.

Taking into consideration such a trivial, corporatist reason as creating a character just not to lose its publishing rights, the first issue of the series is pretty good in itself, presenting an interesting, powerful and independent female-character with such a suggestive and playful description as dual lawyer-womanbeast. Jennifer Walters is a hero with lots of potential, ruined in subsequent issues by very poor writing, plots totally devoid of coherence and a surrounding crowd of secondary characters each one of them more dull and void than the other. The situations sometimes untangle with spontaneous changes of mind or climaxes so absurd and ridiculous that are, in the best of cases, quickly forgotten. The dual-personality presented by The Incredible Hulk is probably one of his best traits, but in Savage She-Hulk it is almost non-existent, She-Hulk being just a somewhat angrier and stronger version of Jennifer Walters, but strangely conserving her goals and reasoning. And what about the love triangle in which Walters somewhat engages with two simpletons characters? Such huge uninteresting losers!.

All in all, the series go in decrescendo, presenting sci-fi and fantasy plots used thousands of times before in Marvel, and definitely ruining a very good superhero with so much more potential.

Blindzider says

I don't love the character, but I've been curious about her origin for awhile. I do enjoy reading the original 60's/70's material of Marvel characters to see their early portrayals.

I read a little bit of the forward first, by the author, and he admits up front that She-Hulk's creation was purely so that Marvel would own the rights to her. There was a fear that the currently airing, and popular, Incredible Hulk TV show would debut the character there. Sadly, by reading the first issue, you can tell it was rushed. The circumstances were thrown together very quickly without much build-up or development as far as Jennifer getting her powers.

The next few issues are spent developing her supporting cast, which I felt was a decent effort although not entirely original: the friend who knows the secret identity, but also is in love with them, the non-superhuman side having an "enemy"/bully, the family member that drives the character through emotion, etc. Kraft also mentions trying to add a bit of humor, which I never got out of reading it. Most of it came off as being hokey. I get what he was trying to do though; get away from the dour and depressing tone of the real Hulk's series. And that's one of the things he should be applauded for.

The second thing would be that the She-Hulk still retains her intelligence, basically creating a female character with brains and brawn. Later he also imparts on her the ability to control her change, again differentiating her from Bruce and perhaps creating a better character. Kraft also gives her the classic Marvel "feet of clay", multiple human problems in addition to any issues involved with her alternate identity. Some of it is very melodramatic though. It also results in characters acting out on extreme emotions to drive the plot, even though a "real" person would try and at least get an explanation. Much of that is ignored for the sake of driving the story in a certain direction though.

After this point, the series lost me. Villains were kind-of cheesy (The Word, for example) or very outlandish (specifically the Man-Wolf story). The latter being filled with lots of prose to explain away what was happening without any real satisfactory understanding.

There's something about Stan Lee's original efforts that had that bit of charm in them. While Jennifer Walters is a strong character to be added to the Marvel Universe, her early adventures (so far) leave much to be desired.

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